



Deeper Spiritual Growth Opportunities for 2019

At VHUMC:

1. The Wesley Challenge: 21 Days to a More Authentic Faith – January 2019

Go to: <https://vhumc.infellowship.com/Forms/408613>, to have a book ordered for you OR get one on Amazon. Studies are being done in many Sunday School classes and on Wed. at 6 pm in Rm 222.

Join us in a 21-day journey following the 21 questions used by John and Charles Wesley's Holy Club at the outset of the movement called "Methodism". These questions were used to develop the spiritual habits, practices, and actions leading to a thriving Christian life. This study will follow our Jan. sermon series: New Year / New You: The January Challenge. Whether you do this individually, in a small group, or in your Sunday School class, this study will help us start the new year with spiritual practices to draw us closer to God.

2. Disciple – FAST Track: Becoming Disciples through Bible Study – starts in January 2019

<https://vhumc.infellowship.com/Forms/408747> – register for a class and get materials ordered for you, (Sun at 5 pm, Tues. at 10 am, Wed. at 6 pm. Study starts on Sun., 1/13/19)

This study, part of the Disciple family of Bible studies, provides a great option for busy people who seek to gain a better understanding of the Bible and want to grow as disciples. FAST TRACK will meet in small groups for 12 weeks in the spring and will feature scripture and readings to discuss each week, along with a DVD for further facts and ideas.

3. Soul Keeping: Caring for The Most Important Part of YOU – runs throughout Lent

Look for a link to order books soon. The study will follow the sermon series 3/10 – 4/7.

In an age of materialism and consumerism that tries to buy its way to happiness, many souls are starved and unhealthy, unsatisfied by false promises of status and wealth. We've neglected this eternal part of ourselves, focusing instead on the temporal concerns of the world – and not without consequence.

Bestselling author John Ortberg present a spiritually satisfying classic that will help you rediscover your soul – the most important connection to God there is – and find your way out of the spiritual shallow-lands to true divine depth.

Across our Community:

4. **UMC Read Together Program**– sign up to read the Bible across the UMC Conference
<https://na-reg.brtapp.com/ReadTogether>

The North Alabama Conference Adult Discipleship Team invites you to join Bishop Wallace-Padgett and other North Alabama Conference United Methodist leaders in reading through the Bible in 2019.

The Adult Discipleship Team is developing materials and encouragement for those who choose to participate in this venture. In addition to the daily reading schedule, blog posts and podcasts will be provided of various North Alabama clergy and laity as they reflect on the daily readings.

5. **AL Walk to Emmaus Retreats** – Camp Sumatanga ; various dates throughout the year
<https://alaemmaus.org/walk-schedule>

The Walk to Emmaus aims to inspire, challenge, and equip local church members for Christian action in their homes, churches, communities and places of work. Emmaus lifts up a way for our grace-filled lives to be lived and shared with others. It is an opportunity to meet Jesus Christ in a new way as God's grace and love is revealed to you through other believers.

The Walk to Emmaus experience begins with the prayerful discernment and invitation from a sponsor. The entire weekend is wrapped in prayer and meditation, special times of worship and daily celebration of Holy Communion. Men and women attend separate weekends.

6. **Silent Retreats** – Sacred Heart Monastery, Cullman; Fri., 4/5/19 – Sun., 4/7/19
<https://www.umcna.org/eventdetail/11650156>

"Pray and Work":

[Experience a Deeper Listening to God through the Rhythm of Benedictine Silence & Prayer](#)

Although most of the retreat is spent in silence, worship services built into the schedule allow for time in community while maintaining an attitude of contemplation. Private rooms enable participants to maintain the silence of the retreat. Home-cooked meals are served, in silence, cafeteria style. Participants are welcome to join the monastic community for Lauds and Vespers. The peaceful environment and beautiful grounds provide a contemplative atmosphere that encourages spending time alone with God. The Sisters beautifully live out St. Benedict's advice to welcome the stranger as Christ.

7. **5-Day Academy for Spiritual Formation** – Camp Sumatanga; Sun.1/27–Fri.2/1/19

<https://www.umcna.org/eventdetail/11473893>

A program of Upper Room Ministries, the 5-Day Academy provides an opportunity for clergy and laity to deepen their relationship with God through a daily rhythm of prayer, worship, learning and reflection. Each day includes teachings by gifted spiritual leaders, periods of silence, morning and evening prayer, Eucharist, covenant groups and community time. Time for rest and recreation are also part of each day. The focus of this year's retreat is Longing for God.

The Academy for Spiritual Formation is...

- A time for intentional spiritual growth in a disciplined community of prayer, study, worship, and fellowship
- A place where times are set aside for silence to enhance personal prayer and reflection
- A life-changing experience to be shaped and formed in the image of Christ for the sake of others
- An opportunity to experience a daily contemplative rhythm of morning prayer, night prayer and Eucharist
- A vessel for healing, rest and renewal

8. **Spiritual Director Training Program** – 2-yr certification for laity and clergy

<https://www.umcna.org/postdetail/opportunity-for-spiritual-formation-and-growth-12553965>

What: A two-year certification program for the formation of spiritual directors in the Christian tradition and for our time.

Who: Those who have discerned a sense of call to offer spiritual direction or spiritual companionship are invited to apply. This program is open to laity and clergy.

When: 2019-2021 Cohort starts coursework in March 2019 with the first intensive May 2019 and program completion in Feb 2021.

Where: Distance learning and 6 on-site intensives in various locations.